

South Coast attorney marks three decades in employment law

Doug Large, a partner in Santa Barbara's Archbald & Spray, admires and can recite rule No. 17 from Strunk and White's "The Elements of Style:" "Omit needless words."

The rule fits Large, who has just marked 30 years with the Santa Barbara employment law firm Archbald & Spray, 25 of them as a partner.

He has a love of language and precise editing. "I'm more of a tree person than a forest person," he said.

During three decades, Large has worked in employment law, focusing on workplace policies, wage and hour concerns, employee handbooks and counseling employers on how to make lawful terminations.

He's also specialized in energy



STEPHEN NELLIS
Law

clients, representing companies such as Shell Oil Co. and Venoco.

Large has had a strong interest in business, dating back to before 1972, when he completed an economics degree from the University of California, Los Angeles.

He was unsure how far he would go in the business world without another degree and, with encouragement from his father, earned his juris doctorate from the Pepperdine School of Law in 1975.

Afterward, he came to Santa Barbara.

Even 30 years later, he said that was a lucky move. "I was privileged to begin



Large

my legal career in Santa Barbara, which is difficult to do," he said. "There are probably more lawyers here than any other place but Wall Street."

Large flirted briefly with estate planning, but was unsatisfied because he was seldom in court.

He liked the idea of taking a position and advocating it before a judge.

That he did, taking cases as far as the California Supreme Court.

He enjoys the adversarial nature of the law profession and has tremendous respect for worthy opponents.

He recalled a case in which he defended a large tobacco company being sued by the family of a smoker who had died.

Large, no smoker himself, convinced the court that the plaintiff's death was not caused by smoking.

But what still stands out in Large's mind is the high-caliber legal teams on both sides.

Over time, Large, who has represented the management side of labor disputes through most of his career, has shifted from fighting in court to preventative counseling.

He enjoys the challenge of coaching businesses to head off litigation, he said, because there is often "more creativity required to resolve a dispute than to sue about it."

"I've learned over time that [litigation] is a very expensive way to resolve disputes," Large said. "I like to keep my clients out of the courtroom ... so they can practice business rather than practice law."

COUNTY COUNSELS

James Lindholm, who served as San Luis Obispo County counsel from 1977 until late last year, when his health failed, died Jan. 31 at his home in Los Osos.

Lindholm, 64, had pancreatic cancer. He is the only person to have been San

Luis Obispo County counsel, serving in the position since its creation in 1977.

He led 10 attorneys from the district attorney's office to form the office.

Since October, when Lindholm stepped aside because of failing health, Wyatt Cash, assistant county counsel, has filled his position.

After 20 years in the department, Santa Barbara County Counsel Shane Stark stepped down Jan. 25.

Stark has penned two colorful works – "The Owllet's Guide to Public Business" and "The Eaglet's Guide to Public Law" – that are used in county counsel offices throughout the state. On Jan. 15, the Board of Supervisors named David Wallace, a former Santa Barbara city attorney, as a temporary replacement for Stark.

PICKETT ELECTED

Congratulations to Michelle Lee Pickett, who has been elected as a shareholder in the Santa Barbara office of Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, formerly Hatch & Parent.

A member of the corporate and business group, Pickett concentrates on federal income, California income and property tax, mergers and acquisitions, and general corporate and business matters.


She represents private and public companies as well as public-private entities in all stages of the business cycle.

WOOD & BENDER CHOSEN

Camarillo-based Agromin chose Ventura-based Wood & Bender as its corporate legal counsel.

Agromin, the green-waste recycling company that picks up grass clippings and fertilizes Ventura County agriculture, won a Business Times small business award last year. Caroline Hurtado of Wood & Bender was honored as a "Forty Under 40 Award winner."

• Stephen Nellis can be reached by e-mail at snellis@pacbiztimes.com.



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505 Bath Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
805.564.2070

www.archbald.com

I was privileged to begin my legal career in Santa Barbara...

Doug Large
Archbald & Spray